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INFORMATION REPORT

COUNTRY **USSR**

SUBJECT **Political Criminality in the Soviet Union**

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2. What can and cannot be fruitfully communicated? How can it be communicated? This is the question with regard to the following pages. Operationally, the question can be translated into the following problems: What constitutes political criminality in the Soviet Union? What are the ingredients of various aspects of political criminality in

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the Soviet Union? It must not be underemphasized that this paper will, obviously, be far from complete. Also, it must be underlined that no evaluation is made, implied, or desired as to whether or not, if successful, such an approach should be used. In a time, however, when the West is looking for alternate ways of dealing with the Soviet Union, it might be useful if this potential tool were at our disposal. This theory cannot be discarded unless evident logical fallacies are disclosed. The only refutation of this theory lies in action, whether it be experimental or live political action. This theory is operational in the sense that it permits a new way of looking at an old problem and it thereby opens up new possibilities of action. Essentially, another rational model is being offered regarding one specific and probably quite important problem of the Bolsheviks. It is not what is in this paper that may matter eventually but rather what an approach of this general kind may lead up to.

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The Functional Vulnerability of the Bolsheviks

3. By definition, the West is limited to the problems within the Bolshevik Party and only by implication with identical conditions in the rest of the Soviet social system. As societal members and as members of the elite vanguard, the Bolsheviks perform certain functions. They are role actors and as such survive in the society. Not surviving does not always mean "biological death" but only if they, to an extent, abide by appropriate norms which pertain to and define each social role. This is elementary sociology and we are conceptually operating in the framework of reference of the functionalists (Linton, Parsons, and Merton).

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Functional vulnerability as a concept is used to denote a rather intricate social situation which precedes the punishment for political criminality of Bolshevik role performers. The ex post facto indicant of this vulnerability is simply the recorded, disclosed, known fact of removal, dismissal, charge, accusation, trial, and punishment of the actor. Vulnerability is operationally a latent condition of a purge. This functional vulnerability may be a product of numerous factors. Personal ambitions, incompetencies and anxieties are such factors. Also, incompatibilities between two and among several social roles, incompatibilities which may lead to professional jealousies on one hand, and/or to clashes of authority on the other hand.

4. The ex post facto description of vulnerability situations gives rise to what may be called categories of political criminality. Thus, an individual is removed for a reason, for a purpose, or both. Regardless of numerous reasons which may be given officially, or may be inferred, these reasons and purposes behind removals and purges are describable in 12 distinct conceptual categories. These categories are parsimonious and quite possibly one or two additional distinct categories may be omitted. This serves to point out the lack of completion of this paper.

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5. Following are the 12 categories of criminality, randomly listed:

- a) Factionalism
- b) Nationalism
- c) Opportunism
- d) Subjectivism
- e) Defeatism
- f) Lack of vigilance
- g) Lack of competence
- h) Sentimentalism
- i) Favoritism
- j) Lack of self critical attitude
- k) Lack of activism
- l) Suppression of criticism

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A political crime is categorically subsumed under one or several of these categories. Let us suppose that there are no more distinct categories of criminality and base further approach on these 12 distinctions.

The Prerequisites of Political Criminality

6. [] discuss the motives which make for "criminal activities" of individual Bolsheviks for nothing is known about the motives. It is only known how, ex post facto, these motives are described and these definitions fit one or several of the categories. Each of these categories can be analyzed operationally along two lines: one, for a crime, political or otherwise, to be a crime, a variable amount of objective evidence is necessary; two, others in the society - the appropriate agencies like the police, superiors, subordinates, or colleagues - have to perceive of the criminality of the referent individual. This is what might be called subjective evidence. Largely, it is the belief that the individual in question is capable of the alleged crimes or actually guilty of these crimes. In the following, the terms evidence and perceptions will be used respectively. By evidence [] what the concept denotes in our own legal system. By perceptions [] other people's beliefs, stereotypes, notions or opinions as to innocence and guilt, criminality or the absence of it. In each political crime category both evidence and perceptions are necessary. By this, political crimes do differ from all other crimes where perceptions do not matter and evidence is all that counts. By this distinction our legal system significantly differs from the totalitarian ones. The amount of evidence necessary for criminal guilt is a variable amount. It enters in variable quantities into the different crime categories. Also, perceptions determine criminality to varying extents for the different categories.
7. Our next step, operationally, must be one of defining the crime categories. This will not even be attempted for considerable work is required to do precisely that. [] define verbally; [] to define by listing the conditions in terms of evidence and perceptions which in the past have established Bolshevik precedencies of criminal behavior. In such an analysis, each crime category would be defined by a list of evidences and perceptions which seem to have entered the picture. The evidences are a matter of record; the perceptions can be inferred but this, for our purposes, may still lead to reliable results.

The Role of Perceptions

8. It is in a totalitarian system that perceptions may entirely suppress evidences. It is in the totalitarian system that perceptions in the absence of evidence may decide upon the fate of an individual performer. Obviously, if it can be disclosed how far perceptions enter into the operational definitions of each crime or of each crime class, it can also be determined which kinds of social situations and in what kinds of social roles they occur and with what frequencies action may result even though there is no evidence available to make it mandatory. In this totalitarian system, an individual may be removed and punished because he is not trusted, liked, or tolerated. Furthermore, with unfavorable perceptions evidence may be fabricated due to the investigation methods used by the Bolsheviks. Thus, reality may be, and has often been, revised so as to fit a new crime pattern. An individual is believed, for various reasons, to be a criminal. His past behavior may be reinterpreted and previously unimportant latent vulnerabilities will play the role of evidence. Quite often the individual accused on the basis of perceptions provides evidence against himself by simply confessing to a variety of crimes. Similarly, an individual who is not perceived of as a criminal will have a relatively easy time to get by even with actual disloyal activities. Only if overwhelming evidence were produced would a case be made against him. When an individual is perceived as a criminal, or rather as a potential criminal, the perceiver

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looks for evidence and considers his own dislike of the vulnerable individual to be evidence.

Dynamics of Manipulation

9. Manipulation means, of course, that the Bolsheviks can be manipulated as individuals or in their social roles or in their group configurations. At least four questions must be answered satisfactorily before a theory of manipulation becomes actually usable from the viewpoint of our psychological warfare. Who is to be manipulated? How? What are the techniques necessary to manipulate? By whom is this to be done? Evidently the first two questions are substantial in nature, whereas the latter two are instrumental. Answers to the last two questions can result only when adequate answers are available to the first two problems.

a) Who is to be manipulated? The problem may be reinterpreted as follows: Who are the individuals who, in the social context of Bolshevism, are most vulnerable? Many ~~ambivalent~~ points then have to be analyzed such as: Who are the individuals most vulnerable with regard to their performance - ie, with regard to objective evidence? Who are the individuals most vulnerable with respect to other people in their social orbit? Evidently problems of ambitions, likes, dislikes, jealousies, or in a general sense, relational (human relational) problems have to be assessed.

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b)

Relational antagonism may result from, for example:

- 1) emotional feelings, producing mutual dislikes;
- 2) mutual perceptions of contradictory social roles;
- 3) the defining of other individuals as "interfering with one's opportunities"; and perhaps other factors.

Relational protagonists would be defined as:

- 1) friends;
- 2) individuals whose social roles are complementary to the extent that one benefits from the other benefiting also, and vice versa.

10. From the viewpoint of manipulation, perceptions of relational antagonists are distorted in any case. Obviously, such crime categories can be manipulated with special facility where the type of crime rests primarily on perceptions and only secondarily, or little, on evidence. The more a given crime category therefore depends on perceptory evidence rather than on factual evidence, the more manipulatable that area of deviation. This is an hypothesis and as such needs to be tested. The background material on specific individuals could disclose exactly which political crime category may or may not be applicable. It must be clear, however, that vulnerability cannot be created. It is only latent vulnerability that might conceivably be promoted or aggravated by manipulation.

A Summary Remark

11. in the Bolshevik system, purges of individuals are often based on perceptions (by others) while actual (legal) evidence enters the picture to a variable degree. each of

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the political crime categories upon analysis will reveal that the degree to which perceptions are important in contrast with evidence is relatively stable. This means then that each political crime category is operationally definable as a ratio of perceptory accusations and evidence of misbehavior and that, from case to case, for that category (like nationalism) the ratio will remain about the same (ie, will significantly fluctuate from case to case). It has been implied in our discussion and such is our actual contention, that an individual is in perfect control of conditions producing evidence of his criminality. This is to say that a given Bolshevik simply does not behave "criminally". If evidence were forged against him, by his domestic enemies or by others, an "innocent" Bolshevik might counteract by presenting evidence contradicting the charges. On the other hand,

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the Bolsheviks are not in control over the perceptory accusations made against them by their domestic antagonists. If someone states bluntly, "You are an opportunist" and that someone is in good standing, there is no way in which the statement, "No, I am not" could be accepted as outweighing the seriousness of the charge. It is these factors over which an accused Bolshevik has no control which lend themselves to manipulation from the inside as well as from the outside. The more a given type of political crime is defined by these subjective perceptions (by others), the more manipulatable that crime category is bound to be.

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12. Of the 12 categories of crimes it would seem logical to hypothesize that some involve an overproportion of perceptory accusations, eg, opportunism, subjectivism, sentimentalism, lack of activism, lack of self critical attitude. In practical terms, these crimes and perhaps others are defined in the most vague sense only and permit, therefore, a variety of interpretations by the MVD, by the judges and the "peoples' tribunals", by the superiors, etc. This is true also, to some degree, about all the other categories, while obviously civil criminal activities such as embezzlement, acceptance of bribes and such, are crimes only in the presence of actual evidence and hardly any perceptory accusations may enter the picture.

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